

Clinical Cases.

REPORTS OF CASES OF INSANITY FROM THE INSANE DEPARTMENT OF THE PHILA DELPHIA HOSPITAL.

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CASE XV.—*Katatonia.*

The history of the following patient is imperfect, some of the records of the case having been lost at the time of the fire at the hospital, and it being difficult to obtain from the patient himself a clear and connected story.

The patient, a young man twenty-three years of age, was admitted to the nervous wards of the Philadelphia Hospital in 1883. He had been somewhat depressed mentally, although a clear history of melancholia could not be obtained. He was at this time distinctly cataleptic, and exhibited some of the phenomena of automatism at command. On one occasion, Dr. Mills gave to a ward class a demonstration of his cataleptic condition. Later he became excitable and somewhat violent, and was transferred to the insane department of the hospital, where he has since remained. At one time, he had hallucinations of hearing and hystero-epileptic and cataleptic seizures. He was and is addicted to the use of morphia. The records of his condition at the time he suffered from mania have been lost.

The following are the statements of his physical condition at the time of admission to the insane department:

Height, 5 feet $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches; weight, 135 pounds; dark complexion; slender but well built and well nourished; head and face well shaped; no abnormality of organs of special sense; abdomen distended and prominent; prepuce long; patient active and no special disease of any organ. He was fairly educated and had studied and practised pharmacy. He stated that he had to discontinue his business because he heard strange noises and sometimes had spells.

A few records entered in December, 1883, have been preserved. The following notes were made December 28th, 1883: "The

patient is quite communicative, he shows a tendency to use grandiose and high-sounding words and phrases, without a strict adherence to their proper meaning. His expressions are also somewhat involved and halting or hesitating. The following is quoted as having been used by him at this time: "I was emphatically disposed to be absorbed in the occupation of attempting what I had purposed, etc."

Since 1883 the patient has remained in the hospital, making himself useful in various ways, as assistant in the ward, runner, carrier of the mails, etc. He has shown himself trustworthy, taking an unusual interest in the work assigned to him. His manner and conversation, however, are at all times peculiar and very difficult to describe. His voice is usually effeminate or slightly piping in quality, with a tendency to rising inflections. His expression is smiling or complacent, and his movements might be described as mincing or effeminate. If started upon a subject of interest to him, he will talk on and on, like one wound up for an indefinite period, with stilted, involved expressions, sometimes hesitating, sometimes repeating, using long, sonorous words or phrases, or curious periphrases, sometimes showing slight verbal incoherence.

The following are a few illustrations of his method of talking, taken by a stenographer during this month (June, 1887).

Speaking of the morning papers he said:

"It is one of the ways in which they so much represent the general matters in the item and circumstances—I believe concerning the worldly matters or in matters that would be important to us to receive—I presume everything in general that would come to a paper in the general sense of the term, that is the report of persons and misdoings and so on."

When asked his opinion of one of the patients he replied:

"He seems to be more or less afflicted, combined with slight delirium. He is noisy and troublesome in every way, but I believe he is rather harmless. He does not seem to inflict any one in any way. He seems to be very gentle. He does not offer or show any intention to hit any one, but rather he seems to be rather delicate in his way, but noisy, very noisy, and troublesome, too, sometimes."

When asked whether he could remember the details of his own case he answered:

"No, sir, I don't remember—I scarcely sometimes, but most of the time. This being around about, being in the wards, I believe I know in a general way what I have been engaged at—but no, sir—I scarcely remember the things. Everything seems to be more or less combined and so indistinct that I am not able to realize. In fact, I have more or less a leaning to weakness in some way—rather I do not seem to have strength of mind or greatness—that it seems more or less delicate and weak—slightly so from the effects of the strong minds."